REMEMBERING THE MOUNT PINATUBO ERUPTION

BY JAMOS EVER CO

Presenting Mount Pinatubo, a volcano located in western Luzon near the areas of Zambales, Pampanga and Tarlac provinces. Its eruption in 1991 is considered to be the biggest volcanic eruption of the 20th Century. I was there in Angeles City and experienced the event first-hand. In the morning of June 12, 1991, a holiday celebrating the Independence Day of the Philippines, the first gigantic mushroom cloud was spewed by Mount Pinatubo. On June 15, a major eruption occurred while rain poured down from the sky caused by typhoon Yunya. It was a cloudy Saturday morning when I woke up around 6:00am. But what seems different was the pungent smell of sulphur from the ashes that came out of Mount Pinatubo. Rain fell mixed with volcanic ash. Around 12:00pm, the whole sky was now pitch-black. It was a "night" during the day, an "evening" in the morning. With wet ash fall, a pitch-black sky, earthquakes, mudflows and lahar caused people to panic in all places.

The eruption of Mount Pinatubo reportedly left around 100,000 people homeless, forced thousands to flee from their lands and caused around 840 deaths. It was also noted in studies that the people were affected more by the rain-induced lahar and mudflows than the actual eruption of the volcano.

Postcard sent from Cagayan de Oro!
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On November 16, 1992, the Philippines issued stamps depicting aftermath scenes of the Mount Pinatubo eruption. These stamps were initially issued as postal tax stamps but stopped by the court for being unconstitutional. The use of the stamps stopped on February 1, 1993 but was later re-issued on June 14 as a valid postage for mails. X X X X

Sources:
Co, Jamos. Personal Accounts of the events.
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